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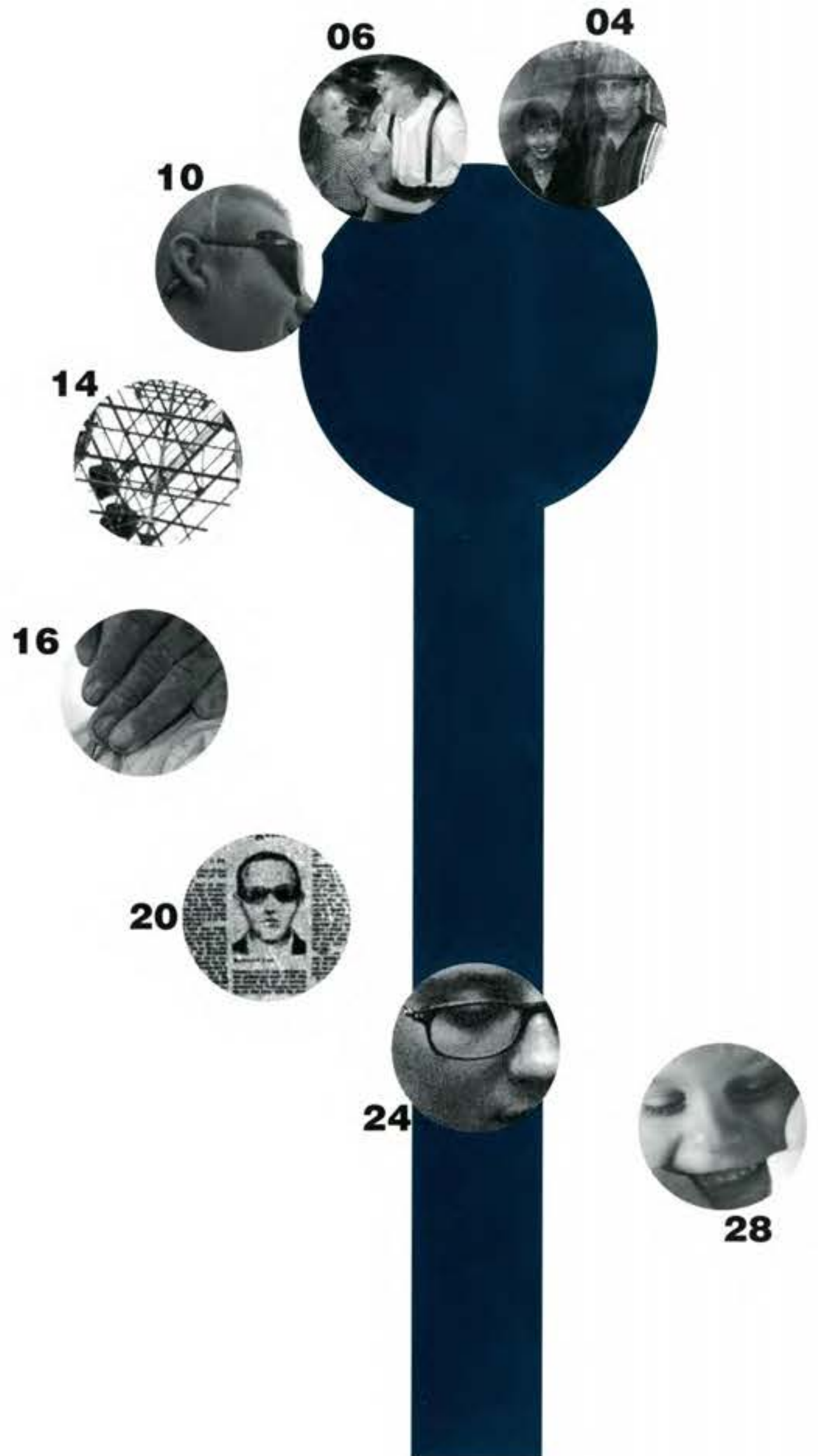
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Klipsun is a student publication of Western Washington University, distributed twice per quarter. Klipsun is a Lummi word meaning beautiful sunset. Klipsun is printed on 50% recycled fiber, 20% post-consumer waste and 35% post-commercial waste. Single copies of Klipsun are distributed free to members of the Western community. Special thanks: Laurie Rossman, Ron Bailey and the entire print plant staff. This issue cost us two coynes and a whole lot o' sense.



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The neon lights shine brightly at 214 W. Holly St. Inside the store, the walls are covered with beaten leather jackets, plaid pants and wool sweaters. Racks strategically cover the floor, and hangers decorate the walls with funky shirts, old hats, scarves and belts.

This is a shoe-lover's paradise, from old Converse to big, chunky boots. The radio beckons potential shoppers with tunes by the 10,000 Maniacs. High on the wall hangs a velvet picture of The Last Supper.

An old case of shelves houses ambiguously shaped ashtrays and sequined hand-bags. Directly above the shelf is a clock glowing with the words "Flamingo Cafe."

The place doesn't reek with a musty, damp-wool, thrift-store stench. This place, the Blue Moon, is kind of a classy joint.

Newlyweds Jimmy and Joann Henry, are not only the owners of the Blue Moon—they are sales people, public relations representatives, marketing specialists, decorators and accountants.

Joann is literally wrapped in her fixation—she wears it. She wanders, straightening items on the racks in the front of the store.

"The difference is we pick over everything," Jimmy says. "If you went to a second-hand store you're going to find all kinds of [stuff]. We save you the problem of having to dig through the racks."

Jimmy, simply dressed, wearing a brown hat and denim jacket—all vintage, of course—reminisces about his previous vintage experience starting in Yellowstone Park in the early '80s.

"There were 1,000 employees [at Yellowstone Park], and I was really into Rockabilly [a mix of early rock-and-roll, hill-billy and blues], so I started wearing all the clothes," he says, "and the next thing you know I had racks in my room."

Soon he was playing vintage dress-up with his friends.

"I was selling to all the employees. We'd have dances, and I'd outfit everybody," Jimmy says laughing.

And so Jimmy's addiction to vintage grew stronger.

"My analogy for this," Jimmy explains, "is other guys are going to talk about their high school football games, but me and my buddies get together, and we talk about that old shirt rack back in '82."

"It's the same kind of thrill—you have to have an unhealthy obsession with finding this stuff to be successful at it, and I do. I still get a thrill out of it," Jimmy says.

Jimmy and Joann like to think they keep their prices fairly reasonable, sell what their clients want and stay "attuned to cutting edge fashion."

"We charge a third less than they charge in Seattle," Jimmy says, talking over Joann's explanation of Blue Moon's pricing system.

"We want to keep (the clothes) moving," Joann says, rationalizing their decision to charge less.

She says people ask her all the time how the Blue Moon can price so low, even lower than Value Village.

"Buy cheap and sell cheap and keep everybody happy," Joann says, pleased.

"Customers need to come in and see new stuff all the time," Jimmy says. "If they come in and see the same thing, OK, nothing changes, they won't come back. You've got to keep [the customer] stimulated, and you've got to have fresh product."

Of course, not everything is inexpensive; there will always be the rare items that are almost too special to sell.

"The older and harder to find items, like bowling shirts, are going to be a little pricier," Joann explains. "They go from \$150 to \$200 down in Seattle. Those are kind of hard to give up," she says, giggling selfishly. "I don't even know if we would sell them."

The couple likes to keep up with the latest trends—the ones that were in style about 50 years ago.

"We try to keep a lot of peacoats in. And the swing thing—we are trying to get a lot more swing dresses, double-breasted suits, hats," Joann says.

The Blue Moon sees all sorts of people—mostly college kids, though.

Western student Lori Hamilton says she shops at the Blue Moon regularly.

"I got my roommate a fuzzy leopard belt with lots of pizzazz for her birthday," she says, proudly. "(The Blue Moon) gives people a chance for a new wardrobe without spending a lot of money—at bargain basement prices."

Jimmy says his goal is to sell one item to each student at Western—whether it be a long pink dress, bottom-heavy with giant strawberry designs, a bright-orange parka with a fur collar and cuffs, or an item from the overall rack.

"Anything in bad taste now," Jimmy explains, "everybody will want in 20 years."

Jimmy and Joann find their fashion pieces everywhere from flea markets to garage sales.

"We took a trip to Montana; that is where you want to be, in little small towns—the 'terminally unhip,'" Jimmy jokes.

Unhip, huh?

That's probably the same term people use to describe Jimmy.

"When I used to live in Utah, I skied in a World War II flight helmet and a big sheep skin jacket with Uncle Sam kicking Hitler in the butt," Jimmy explains. "All the snow boarders would say, 'Bitchin outfit dude,' and I'd say, 'Well, I can't afford new stuff like you punks.'"

Today, Jimmy's taste in attire remains the same, not because he can't afford to rummage through the mall, but because he believes vintage is where it's at.

**story by Jenni Long
photography by Stuart Martin**



fashionably
late



His fingers are fluent in the language of dance. Having rhythmically twirled tireless ladies for more than 50 years, they communicate any step with a mere beckon, nudge, squeeze or lift.

During his years at Mississippi State College, Arnold Duckworth swung bare-armed dames under his arms as stray hairs from their bobbed heads danced out of place, whisked across powdered foreheads and became singed from the heat of flushed cheeks.

Their eyes would gleam with pure delight as his arms tightened, cueing them of an upcoming move. Their elaborately embroidered dresses would blanket the walnut floor, brushing against his legs as the girls slid through. Twisting, they would jump, black Mary Janes clicking right back into the beat of "String of Pearls" or "Pennsylvania 65,000" to face him again.

Fingers that can tap the rhythm of any Sea-Notes song intertwine

around a tall glass of icy pink lemonade dripping with a coat of condensation. Duckworth, 70, lifts the glass to his lips, the ice cubes jiggling lazily in response. The La Conner resident's dark eyes sparkle as he flips through the yellowed pages of his mental diary, reliving the pleasure of those fast-paced nights of swing dancing.

"I can show you things you'll never see in a studio," Duckworth reminisces fondly. "Without formal instruction, we have our own style. You can recognize who went to what city by the way they danced."

Leaning forward, crossing and recrossing his short legs, he brings his elbows to the table, rests his chin on the makeshift bridge of his clasped hands and cocks his head, as if listening for the boisterous strains of Art Shaw, Benny Goodman or Woody Herman.

"There's nothing like a live band to dance to; that makes all the difference in the world," says Duckworth, co-founder of the Island Dance



you're
not making a

of yourself not
doing it
right,”

story by Sara Magnuson

photography by Barney Benedictson

Club, a group dedicated to keeping swing alive and providing its devotees with live bands.

“Live music has a realism to it,” he continues. “It motivates you psychologically, much more than canned music; you can hear every mistake; it’s loud; it has feeling.”

He nestles back into the past, snowy-white hair serving as a fluffy pillow. A grin threatens to explode across his face as he recalls the rules of dance in the late 1940s.

“You didn’t walk up to someone; someone always had to introduce you,” he says.

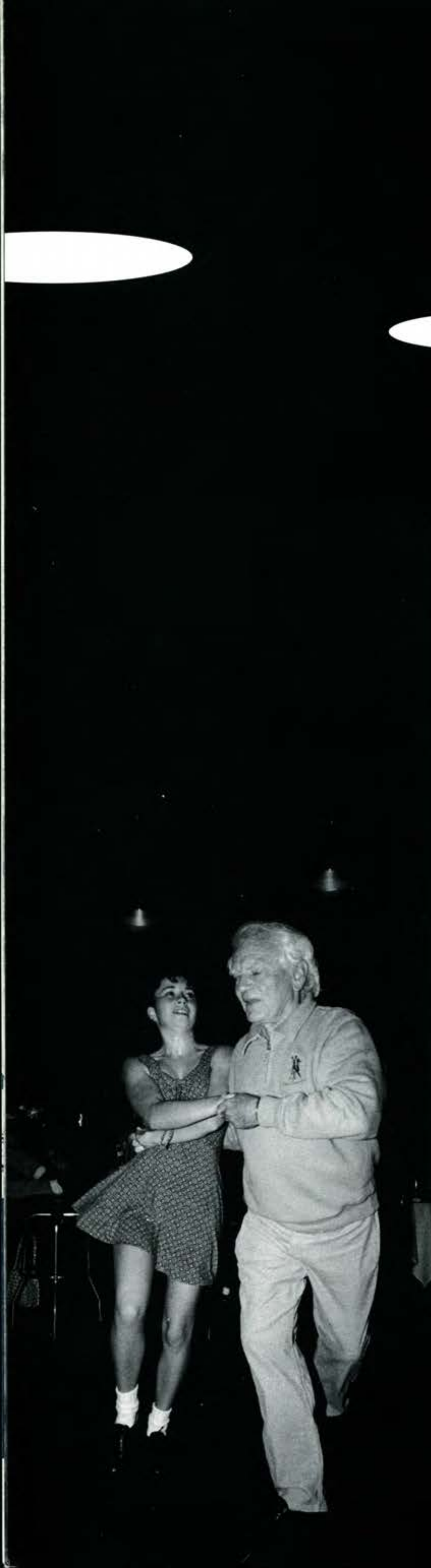
But he has never been one to follow rules. In college, his defiant style shocked Miss Lydia Francis Downing, his future wife.

“I was totally fascinated by his brazenness—I’d never met anybody like that before,” Lydia says.

Duckworth slid into the music major’s arms and has led her two-inch soles through the footwork of more than 48 years of marriage.

“The reason we’ve been married so long is we dance so well together,” he says, a sly smile drawing attention to the wrinkled bags under his eyes. “You understand, I’ve never taken lessons. That is what I want to get across to the young people: There’s no slip-up in swing—it’s all new. I like to improvise. I can do the [same] step four or five times, but I don’t want to do that anymore,” he declares, shaking his hands at shoulder height in mock rage, intent on making his point. “I’m anxious to get away from the routine.”

Gy Johnston, swing dance instructor and officer of Western’s Associated Students Swing Kids Club, wholeheartedly agrees. “Even when you mess up in swing, it’s cool because you’re creating something,” he says, running his hand through his already ruffled chestnut hair.



"Maybe that's why you're smiling—you're making a fool of yourself. If you're not making a fool of yourself, you're not doing it right."

"Go ahead, mess up," urges Johnston from the stage of the Eagle's Hall where the Swing Kids Club hosts its dances. A dancer with years of jazz, ballroom and break-dancing under his feet, but only nine months of swing, Johnston proudly shows off his zoot suit and so shuffles back in history to the early '30s when the outfit first graced the swing stage.

He has no fear of constriction in the baggy, black-and-white-striped pants and matching calf-length coat. A simple white button-down shirt contrasts with the coat's mustard-yellow lining and is complemented by a green tie that, "... looks like something you'd put on a couch."

Johnston, who teaches swing at the YMCA and continues weekly lessons at The Royal and The Factory, leads the 100-plus college students at the Bellingham Eagle's Club through the basic steps of swing. "Step, step, rock-step, step," he says, his voice full of enthusiasm.

One couple practices the step off to the side. The girl smiles gleefully through endless repetitions, adding some stylistic hip sashaying. Looking into her shining eyes, the boy raises her hand slightly, asking through gesture if she's ready to twirl.

With a quick nod and shy smile, she pirouettes under his arm, highlighted-hair flying. She carefully eyes his hands, preparing for the slightest push, tug or lift; listening for a whistle, a mumbled clue, anything that will send her spiraling into the next move.

She feels her arm pulled into a spin and automatically continues the rehearsed routine, gliding past him, hand sweeping his waist and seeking his fingers, ready to be pulled back to the starting position. Her confidence falters momentarily as her clammy, outstretched fingers grapple air. He spontaneously attempts a new step and, for a split second, leaves her off-balance, catching her breath. Immediately, they ease back into their comfort zone: step, step, rock-step, step.

Some amateur dancers prefer to practice the tricky steps in the safety of their own homes. Aspiring swinger Katie Klevjer laughs out loud as Matt Vander Veen, a dancer with a year of swing experience, coaches her through a move in her dining room, playfully chastising her for forgetting the importance of timing.

"Wait, did I say to go down yet? You have to wait," he says, laughing, the sleeve of his forearm spotting dampness from repeated swipes across his forehead.

"The flip is kind of hard because I'm gonna spin you three times," Vander Veen explains as he propels Klevjer into a demonstration. "Put your arm here," he says, placing it on his shoulder and, without further instruction, flipping her. Thwump. Her feet slam to the ground. Caught off guard, she stumbles backward, cheeks glistening, clapping her hands in delight.

"People don't smile that often in [rock] clubs," Johnston comments. "There's something about dancing with a person that's charming. You're dancing for that person; and hopefully, they're dancing for you. We were deprived in the '80s of any method of courtship. People got tired of not interacting with each other on the dance floor. In swing dance, you're doing it with a person—you're creating fun."

Swing lagged in popularity in the '50s as Elvis, television and the end of World War II took center stage. One of swing's original purposes was to entertain soldiers during war, but when they returned from World War II, they had more important things to do than dance. The sixties ushered in freestyle dancing without touching. Dancing with a partner was a thing of the past, until the rebirth of swing in the '90s.

Back at the Eagle's Hall, a swinger's finger wags "no, no, no," as the dancer playfully backs away, knees bent, head shaking in admonition while Johnston advances.

Swinging is all about creating attitude as the dancers spin, flip and glide across the middle of an ever-widening circle of awe-struck, sweaty dancers clapping along to "The Zoots Are Picking Up the Bill."

Johnston takes his partner's hand and shoves her away, only to pull her spinning back to his chest. With barely any time to breathe, he softly cues her under his breath; she plops down, and he spins her on the shiny floor. In a flash of jet-black hair, she springs from an invisible trampoline and bounds into another twirl. Satisfied grins spread across their dripping faces; they dance out of the circle, allowing the next couple to wow the crowd.

"I love watching young people dance," Duckworth said, noting that his group doesn't see many "jams" or duos taking the floor. "Seeing the variations of disco ... it's fascinating, the things I can't do."

His generation enjoyed the basics: Simple turns with one hand—they never used two—impressing the wallflowers with dips rather than flips.

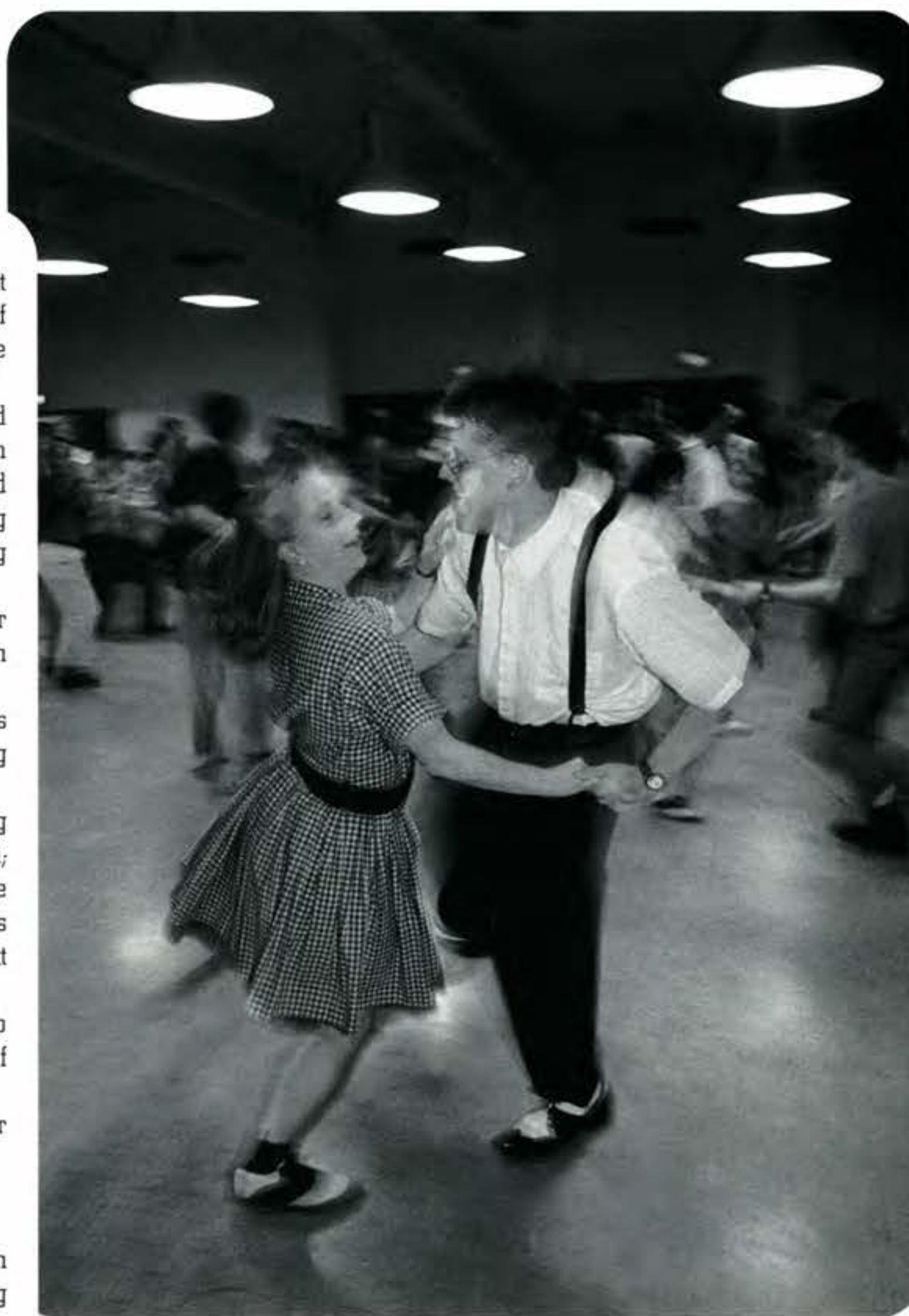
But simple doesn't mean less energetic.

"I get really wet with sweat, but never out of breath," he says.

"It's amazing how hot you get. There's a little bar at one end of the ballroom where you can get something to drink, whether it's ice water or Coke ... or something stronger," Lydia says, giggling.

But nothing strong enough to detract from the pure joy of dancing, of looking stupid in front of people of all ages. This is one activity that spins, steps and swings across generations.

"You're just 'gettin' jiggy' with it," Johnston says.



He walks carefully toward the slightly inclined ramp, left arm held high for balance. The walk has become second nature to him. While others may gawk or gaze with unwitting curiosity, he continues his learned walk without a second thought. The path toward the elevator has become familiar to him. He steps in with the self-assurance of any brazen, 20-year-old college student. As the machine struggles to carry the weight of him and his peers, he flashes a glowing smile at those around him. The doors of the elevator glide open with a mechanical ding, and he continues his walk through the halls. As he turns the doorknob of his room, the solid wood door swings wide; he is not only opening his living quarters to others, but he is opening his world as well. Again, he is vulnerable.

Jeremiah Huber is used to people looking at him. Whether it is at his bent left arm, stiff left leg or the massive scar that curves a line across his shaved, brown hairline and down his right temple, people look. They gaze at the soiled white Nike high-tops, held tight with Velcro. They notice his blue T-shirt tucked carefully into his faded denim shorts, both accentuating his erect, military-like posture. They see a round, youthful face, unscathed by razor's edge, unbefitting the frame of a maturing young man. To those who care to look deeper, there is much more.

"What I really try to get through their head is that everyone is unique in their own way. I have a physical disability that sets me apart from everyone else," he says, leaning back slightly in his chair, locking his fingers behind his head. "It's noticeable. It's obvious. It's one of those things where it's good because if we're all the same, what's the whole point of living?"

Twenty years ago, he was struggling to live. During birth, his umbilical chord wrapped around his neck and choked him. When most babies take their first breath of life, Jeremiah's life was drastically changing.

Jeremiah was born with cerebral palsy and severe epilepsy, the result of brain damage stemming from his birth.

"Everyday I would have close to 2,000 small seizures going continuously off in my brain—all day long," he says.

About once a month, while other children in school were playing, Jeremiah would have a severe Grand Mal seizure that caused his arms and legs to shake wildly.

He was not responding to traditional treatment. His seizures were worsening.

"I was to the point where I could die any day, and that would be that," he says, matter-of-factly.

Tests concluded that the entire right side of Jeremiah's brain "never, ever worked." The only solution was radical brain surgery. This meant surgeons could remove as much of the right side of his brain as they needed.

At 12, Jeremiah faced the biggest decision of his life.

"It came down to the fact that the drugs weren't working. So they said, 'Well, we got this surgery; that's all we can do for you,'" Jeremiah says. "I was like, 'well, hey, might as well try it; I mean, if I die it doesn't matter to me; I won't feel anything.'"

The surgery was a success; the entire right side of his brain was removed and replaced with saline solution.

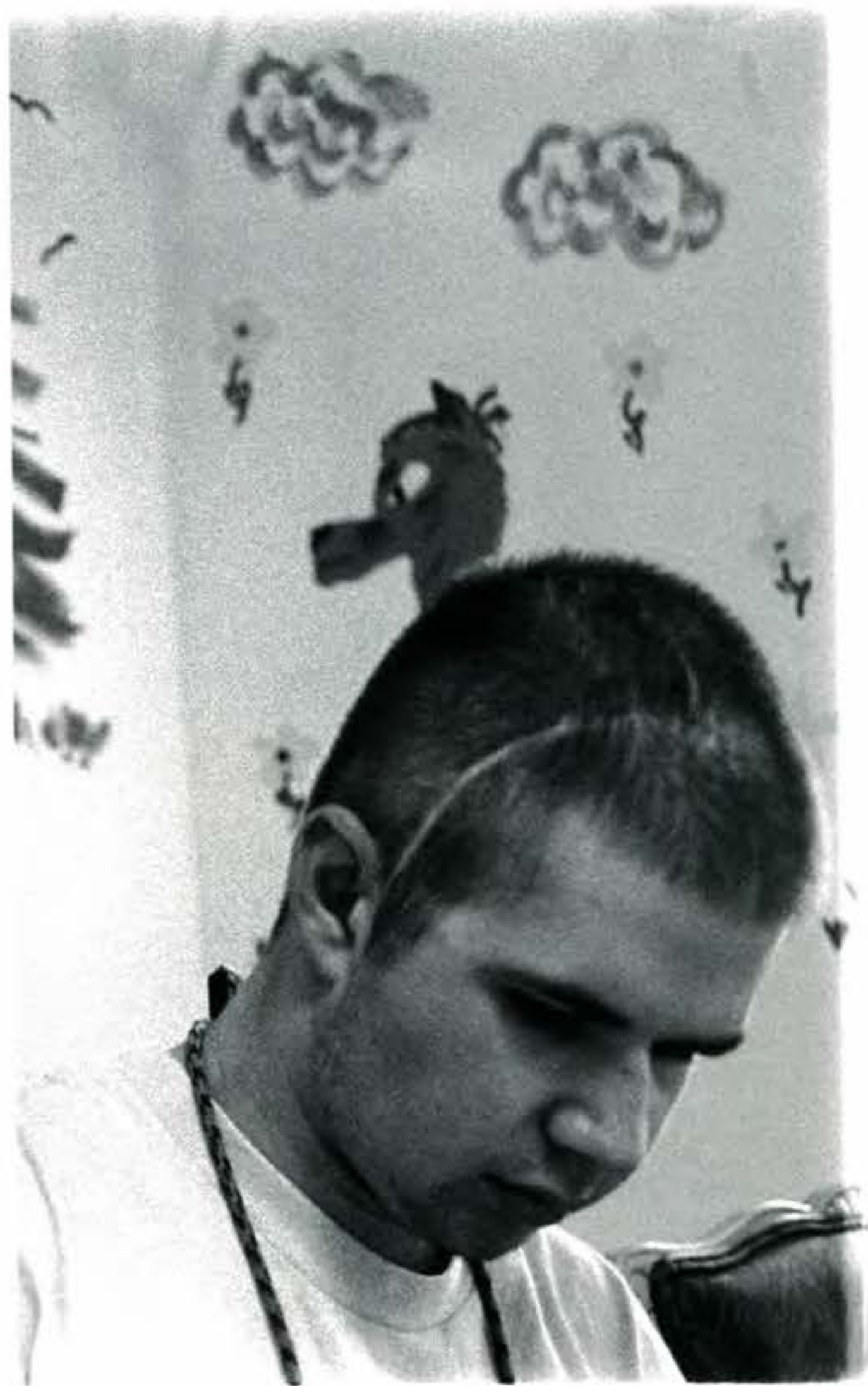
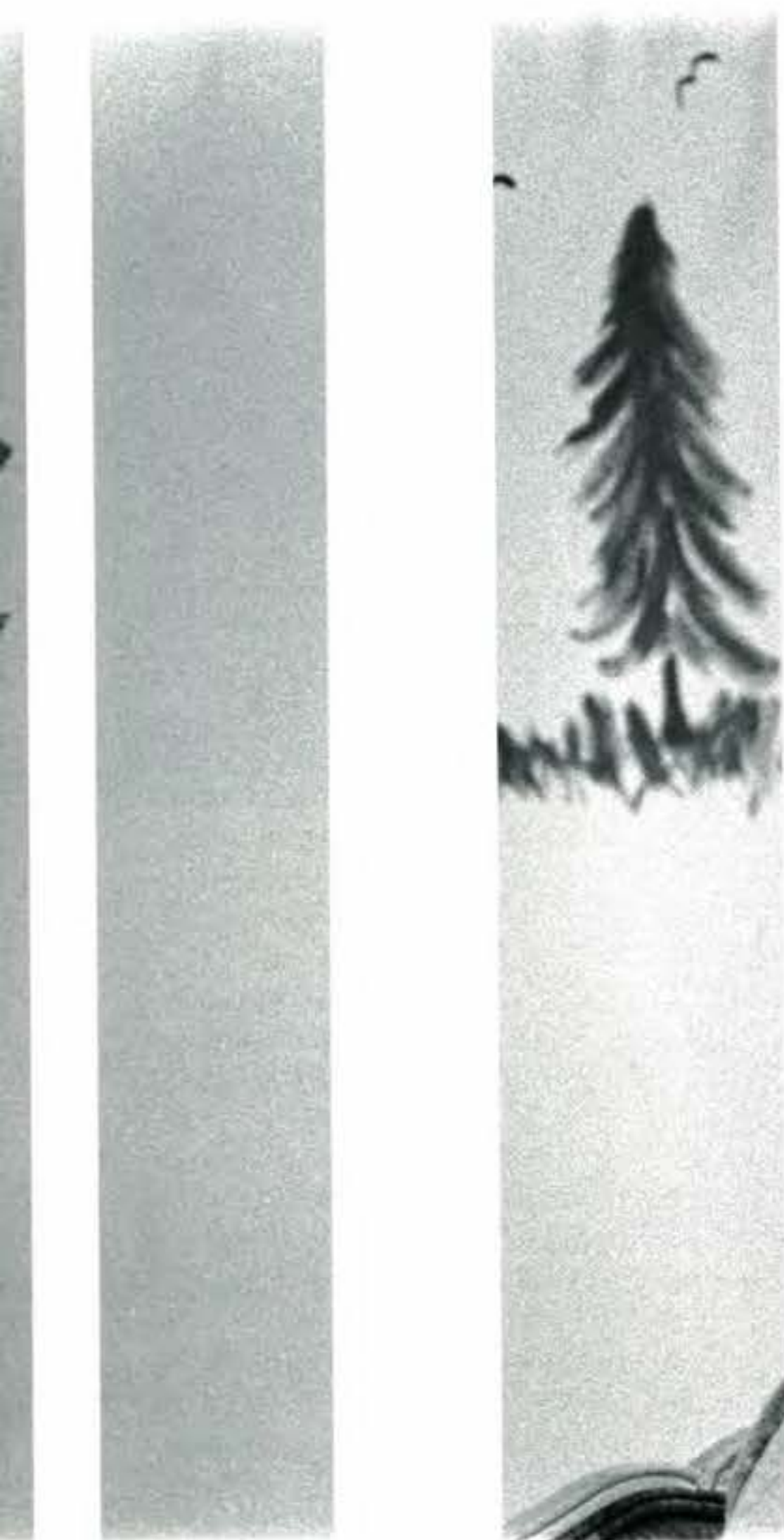
The side effects, however, were tremendous.

Jeremiah couldn't move for a few days; his vision was impaired for more than a month; he couldn't walk for three months and worst of all—the headache.

"I had a mammoth headache; I mean, it was huge, and it pounded and pounded and pounded for four months," he says, cringing while motioning with his hands as if he were in an Excedrin commercial.

A simple infection could have killed him.

story by Chris Blake
photography by AnnMarie Coe



cerebral
STRENGTH



"They gave me antibiotics which made me turn just bright red all up and down my body," he says. "They call that the 'Red Man's Syndrome', and you just felt like you were 1,000 degrees—just burning."

Jeremiah has not had a seizure for eight years and has been off epilepsy medication for seven.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I would never want to have again, but I was glad that it happened when it did because otherwise I would have died, easily," he says, calmly. "The seizures were just overcoming my body."

The recovery was not as hard as it could have been.

"In my case, the brain damage happened at birth, so my left side of the brain compensated, and my whole entire body was running off the left side of my brain," he says. "So, I'm very sequential. I like things in lists. I like to do things in order. I like routines and that kind of stuff. I can't deal very well with the abstract."

This is apparent inside Jeremiah's room overlooking High Street. The tiny room is in meticulous order. The single wood-framed bed is made to perfection, with not a crease in the commemorative Star Wars sheets. The desk is neatly arranged, not a pencil awry. The multi-colored, wooden name plate that spells out "JEREMIAH" in inch-high carved letters sits prominently, perfectly centered atop his computer. A Darth Vader poster stares ominously across the room toward a poster of his nemesis Yoda, both Jedi Masters silently guarding the Star Wars memorabilia that adorns Jeremiah's room.

Jeremiah sits at ease, calmly pointing toward the basketball court he shoots hoops at, describing the pleasure

it brings him. He hones his billiards skills each day on a table that sits three floors below. Jeremiah is comfortable; he is happy.

School was not always such a pleasant place.

"I was treated pretty badly when I was a kid," he explains without flinching, "all high school, all through junior high, all through grade school because I was different. I walked funny. I talked funny. I looked funny."

"After a while you just get used to being cussed at or being demoralized, and you just turn it off," he continues. "It's like you don't feel pain."

Today, Jeremiah is trying to do his part to make sure other children who are different aren't treated the same way he was. For the past seven years, he has gone to his mother's sixth-grade classroom in Kent to speak to children about his disability.

"I go into those classrooms every year, and I just try to say, 'you know, this is the way that it goes. You're going to learn there's people like me who aren't going to walk the same as you, talk the same as you,'" he explains. "They're gonna' have all these scars around their body from all the surgeries they've had, but that does not mean that you can make fun of them, that you can treat them like crap, that you can call them nasty names. It doesn't mean that."

"I try to really push home the fact that 'yeah, I'm different, but what difference does that make?' I have this disability; I have problems, and I deal with them," he says. "If people aren't willing to be nice, then I just say to heck with them."

"I bring Jeremiah into my classes to try and bring to the children's eyes that the world is full of diverse people," says Melody Keyzs, Jeremiah's mother. "Jeremiah tries to make that little crack, so if in the future they see someone with special needs they'll realize 'he's just like me.'"

Jeremiah believes education is the key to getting people to understand what it's like to have a disability.

"I figure if I change someone's attitude I've done a good service," he says. "If I change them to a positive attitude and they don't feel uncomfortable around people with disabilities than I've done something good."

Jeremiah says the education shouldn't stop with the students and that the school system needs to be changed as well.

Many teachers are uncertain how to deal with him or other special needs students.

"They are never given any interaction with special needs people, and that is just a severe injustice because when they get them they have no idea what to do with them," he says.

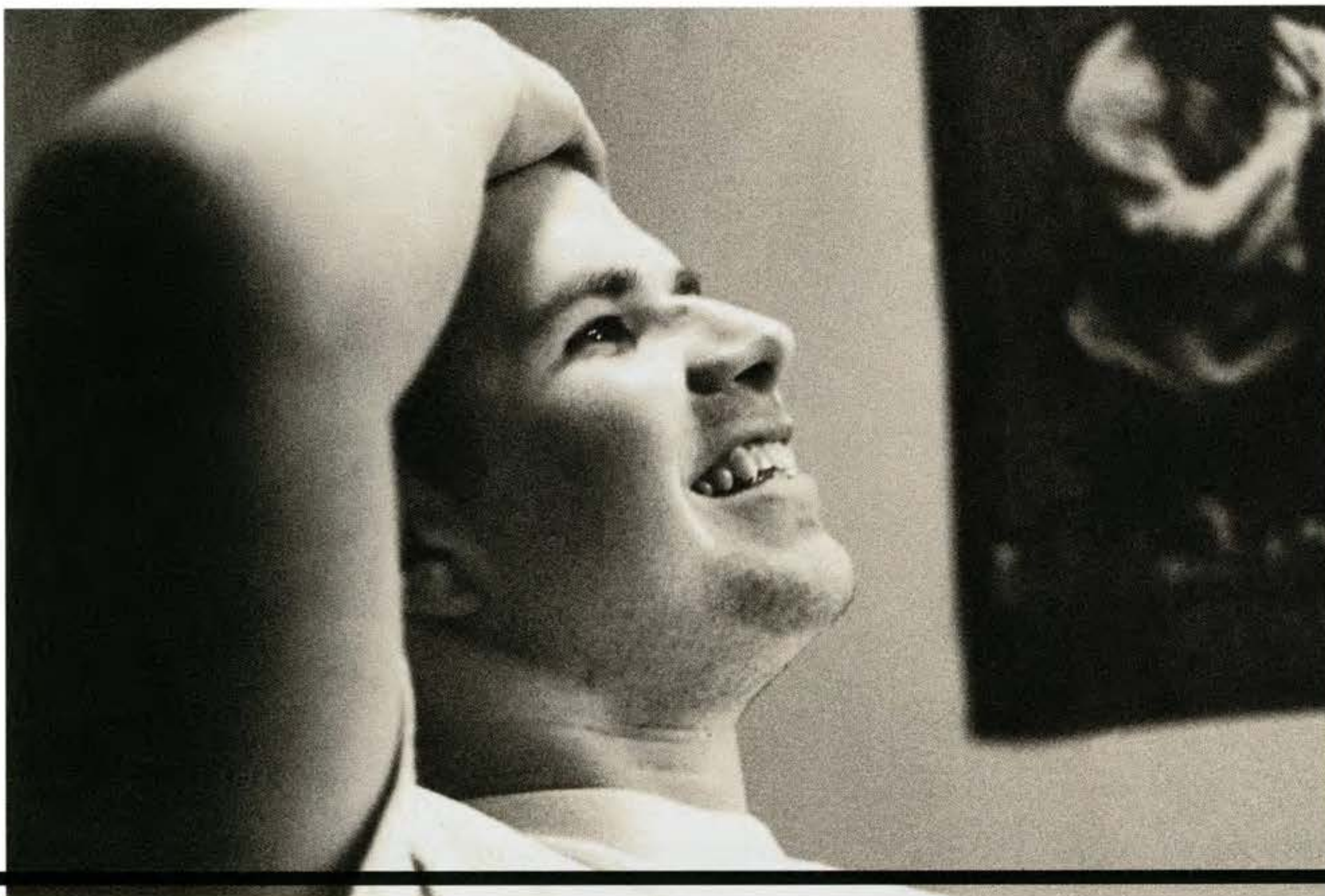
This is not to say society has done nothing to improve accessibility for those with disabilities.

In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in state and commercial jobs, programs and services.

Jeremiah believes that without the ADA he would never have been given the opportunity to go to college.

"Once I got here, then I had to learn the rules of the law and figure out how to argue with instructors to get what I needed," he says. "It was really hard for me to kind of pound it into the teachers' heads that I cannot do certain things."



"I cannot write an essay with my hand; It doesn't work that way. I can't write, write, write; my arm will swell like a football. I have to type everything."

Jeremiah gives instructors a letter that describes his situation and informs them he is entitled to free accommodations such as a scribe, typist or aide.

College has signified a rebirth of sorts for Jeremiah. The emotional toll of years of teasing and cruelty are not easily forgotten, however.

"I got into college, and as a result of all this abuse I had this huge comfort zone—we're talking mammoth," he says. "I didn't want to talk to anyone. I didn't like anyone. I thought society was a bunch of losers. They were vicious, evil people."

"[But] people started saying 'hi' to me and slowly the comfort zone broke," he continues. "It was pretty scary for me because for the first time in my life, someone actually cared to talk to me. For so long I was just this piece of crap that was on the outside."

Prejudice and ignorance still exist, however.

"A lot of people out in Red Square, they watch me; they follow my every move across Red Square. I can see them doing it; they just stare," he says. "It doesn't bother me. I can't do anything about the way that I walk. That's just the way that it goes."

Jeremiah is doing his part to change these views. Last spring quarter he ran for Associated Students Vice President of Diversity. He lost the race but has had a lasting affect on those who know him.

"You think of diversity as only race or ethnicity, but sometimes you forget that diversity is also a disability or limitations," says David Toyer, friend and AS vice president of legislation and communication affairs. "Jeremiah is diversity. He really sums it up."

His diversity is both a driving force and inspiration to those around him.

"He's the type of guy who, if he was on a sports team, you'd want him to be captain," Toyer says. "He raises you to another level. He's inspiration to get off your ass and take the world by storm."

Jeremiah has turned his new-found confidence and successes into an award-winning resume. He plays baritone horn in Western's pep band, tutors chemistry on the side, created his own web page and installs computer upgrades.

Jeremiah is in his first quarter on the debate team. In his first debate he finished third in his division and proudly displays the wooden engraved plaque in his room.

"I never won anything before, so it was a big thing for me," he says.

Jeremiah calls debate his "heart and soul," a claim teammates attest to.

"To see a new guy just jump in and want to work really hard and have to have the coaches hold him back is impressive," says Evan Schatz, teammate and second-year debate member.

"He wins over hearts and minds," Toyer says. "He makes you think, and he makes you feel—that's what makes him so special."

What Jeremiah enjoys most about college and his numerous activities are the friends he has made, yet proving his skeptics wrong is what makes him so special.

"I'm here now ... so 20 years of pain and suffering [and] I wasn't even supposed to make it to sixth grade," he says. "They told my parents when I was in sixth grade I would never make it through junior high, and then they said, 'well, he'll never make it through high school.' They kind of gave me a little better progress report for college but they said, 'Nah, he won't do much.' So now that I'm gonna' major in poli-sci and be a lawyer, I should go back and tell those people where to go stuff it, but now I wouldn't want to ruin their self-esteem."

radio takeover



commentary by Jim Morrell III
photography by Barney Benedictson

Nearly everyone has played Monopoly. They run the green and yellow bills through their fingers, try to buy all the railroads and daydream of how they would spend it—if only the money were real. In the marketplace, the money is real, but not everyone gets to play.

The corporate version of monopoly includes only a select few players. In the real world, real people, working real jobs, are treated like insignificant silver shoes found in front of wooden Park Place hotels.

In the real world, monopoly encroaches on all forms of media. The major TV stations all have corporate owners. NBC is owned by General Electric, CBS by Westinghouse and ABC by Disney. Family-owned newspapers are also headed for corporate takeover.

Microsoft is currently embroiled in an antitrust lawsuit, illustrating monopolistic concerns within another branch of media.

Corporations are also busily ingesting the radio industry.

Since the Communications Act of 1936, enabling a large business conglomerate to own unlimited stations nationwide, radio companies are bought and sold daily.

Huge companies swallow up radio stations, spitting out staples such as original programming, diversity in music selection and overall creativity in favor of increased resources, fewer workers and more money.

Take, for example, a radio station owned by a large company. When purchasing a station, the parent company considers the independent station's format. That is, they consider the particular style of the station: rock, Top 40, country, sports, easy listening and so on.

The parent company searches for a successful station, then aligns one of their pre-existing formats with the station's current format. An offer is made. If the deal is completed, the previously independent station is a lot richer, and controlled by the new owner.

This means the station must play songs according to the new owner's pre-selected format. It may be similar to the old format, but in comparison, inflexible. Much like the difference between giving orders and following them, once an independent station goes corporate, they are told precisely what music to play and how often to play it.

Corporate radio is branching out. Once attributed mainly to major cities, it reaches now to Bellingham.



Corporate owners have recently purchased both KPUG-AM (1170)/KAFE-FM (104.3) and KISM-FM (92.9).

With the purchase of Bellingham station KGMI-AM (790) nearing completion, Debbie Schuitema, program director at KGMI-FM, is unsure how the new, corporate ownership will affect her station.

"It is the way business is done in the '90s," Schuitema said. "It's kind of like Wal-Mart pushing little mom and pop stores out of business ... it's just the trend, and radio is just part of it."

Michael Pollock, general manager at KPUG-AM/KAFE-FM, favors incorporation.

"It is a mixed blessing, but it is a healthy way to do business," Pollock said.

"There are better resources, more opportunities available.

"(The advent of corporate radio) has definitely made life interesting," he continued. "I think it will amount to an overall (improvement) of the quality of the product."

For Pollock, highly budgeted corporate stations offer the means to finance expensive new technology, such as digital broadcasting. This benefits everyone—the parent company, advertisers, the smaller company and the audience. Schuitema is optimistic about the new resources corporate radio will bring to Bellingham's relatively small market.

Ted Askew, station manager at Western's KUGS-FM

(89.3), agrees there is money to be made as a corporate station.

"It is all about ratings," Askew said, smoothing his hair back and slouching further in his chair. "You would be surprised how much half of a ratings point is really worth. You start losing ratings, and then you start losing advertisers. There are a lot of high stakes involved with corporate radio."

However, negative side effects do stem from the corporate merger of radio stations.

While there is a lot of money to be made in radio, the distribution of income is not even. The DJ with the highest ratings gets a good check, then management, then sales reps, right on down the ladder. The remaining on-air personalities scrape the bottom of the barrel.

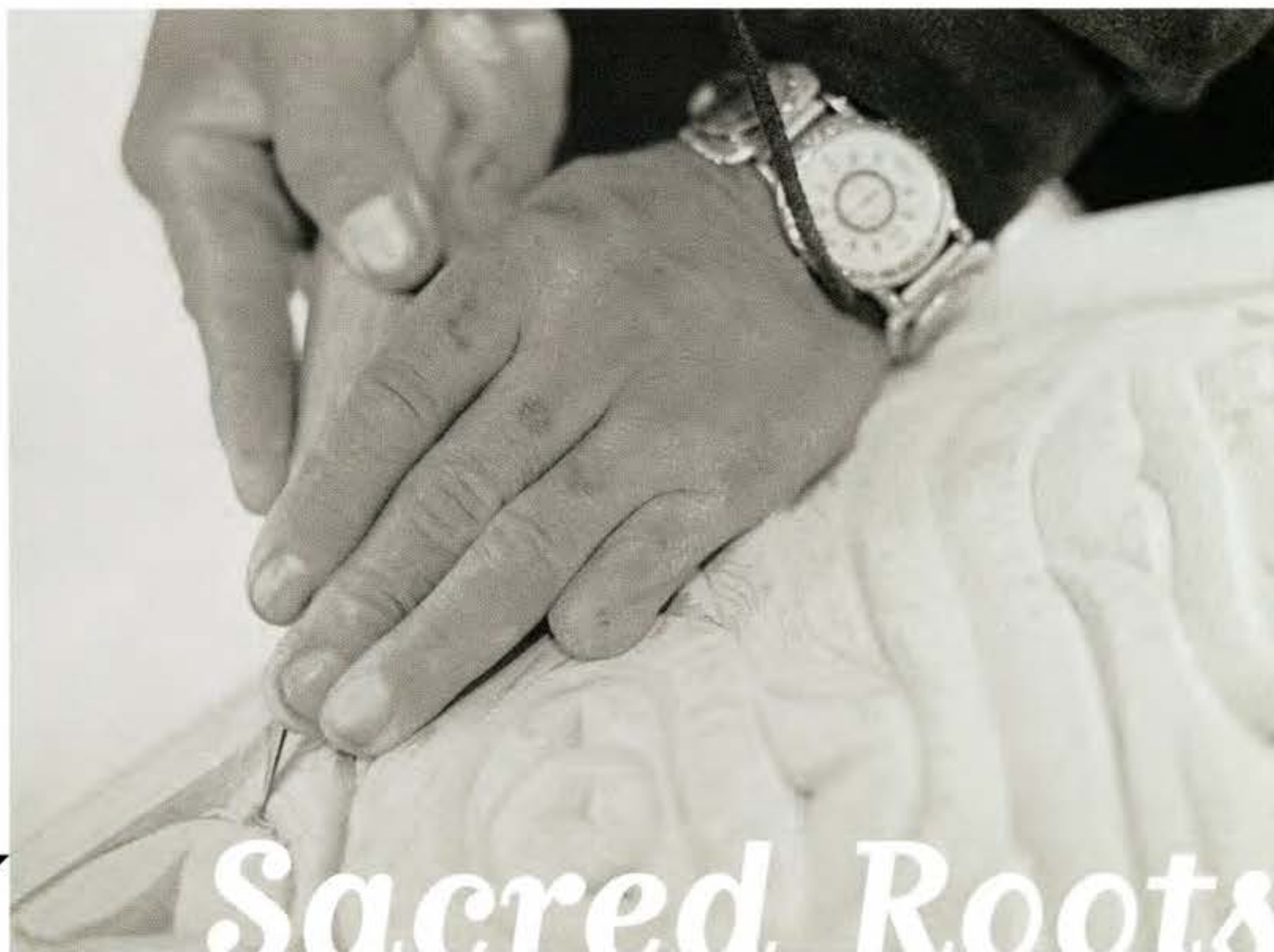
Radio is good business for some, but casualties accompany every corporate buyout. The loss of on-air creativity is one of the most prominent.

Askew said creativity is given less credence after a corporate takeover because it could mean lost rating points. That translates to lost money. Independent ownership helps DJs retain creativity.

Creativity and experimentation give radio the power to influence listeners. The loss of single-owner stations means the rise of audiences that only hear what record companies and their corporate backers spoon-feed them.

Experimentation with open playlists reveals new artists and genres. The success of musicians such as Hendrix, Nirvana and Parliament are due, in part, to DJs who knew good music when they heard it and were allowed to play it.

While corporate ownership allows stations to evolve into new technology, the overall effect of corporate radio will not be fully understood until this realization dawns: The transmissions of corporate radio are music for the masses, music of the lowest common denominator.



Sacred Roots

story by Jenni Odekirk
photography by Tim Klein

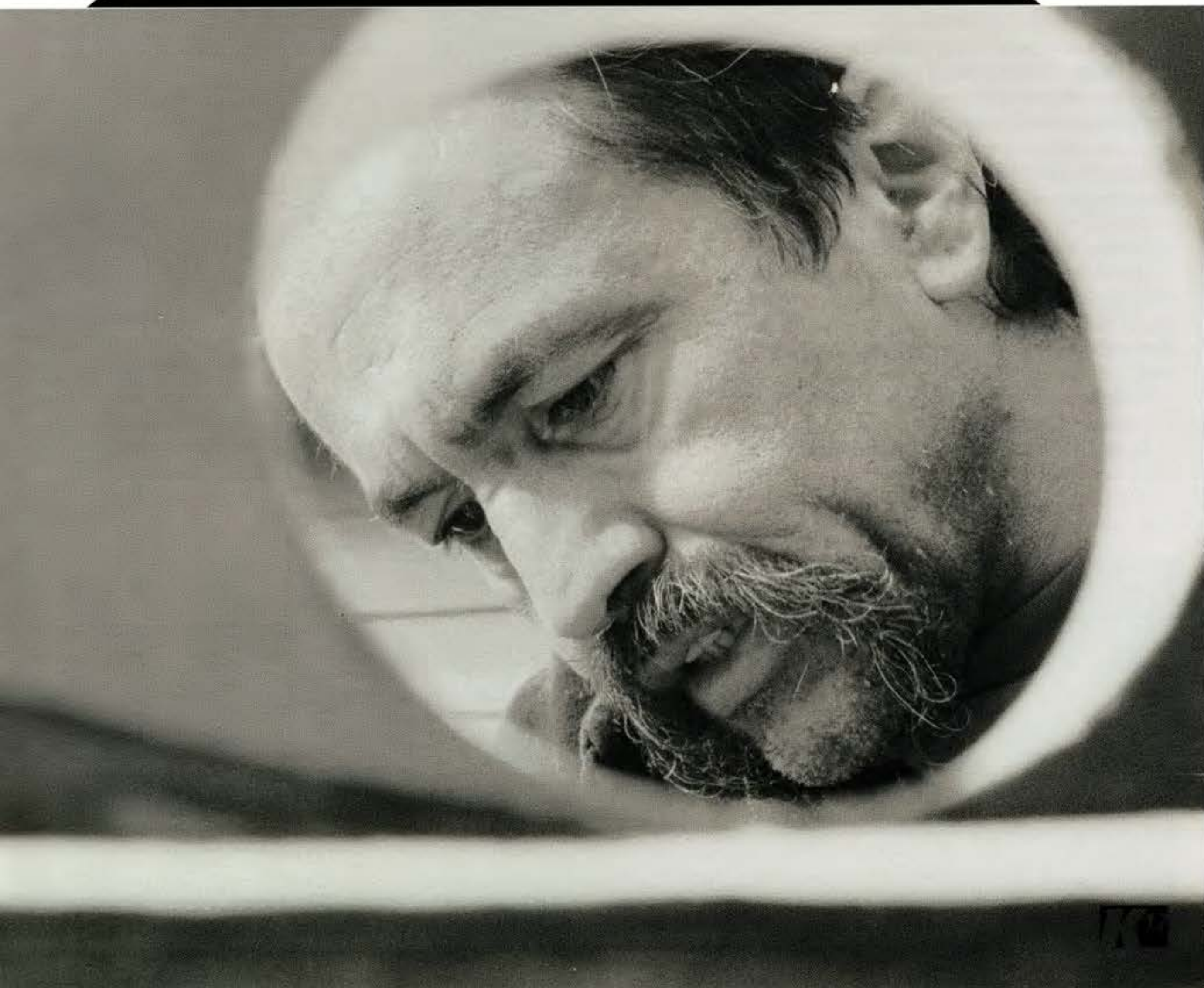
Voluminous piercing eyes glower
past a long, broad beak at passersby in Maritime
Heritage Park. The eyes belong to a carved, wooden raven
with large swirls cut into the wings draped around its body. The raven
perched atop the 14-foot totem pole is a symbol in a Lummi Native American
conservation story.

A Lummi man named Raven braved a flood to bring back food. After nearly dying of
starvation, Raven found Salmon Woman, who saved his life by feeding him her salmon chil-
dren. Raven brought Salmon Woman back home, and she offered the Lummi as many of her
salmon children as they could eat as long as they did not take the salmon from the spawning beds.
The raven was designed by Jewell James, head carver of the House of Tears carving guild. The guild
created the raven in tandem with James and members of the Lummi community.

James' workshop at the Cultural Arts Center at Northwest Indian College (NWIC) is saturated with pow-
erful scents and vivid sights. The bitter, tangy smell of fresh cedar is the first stimulus registered by the
senses. Colorful paintings adorn the wall and momentarily snatch attention. The eye settles on the visual
and functional heart of the room—the smooth, rounded wood carvings that line the left wall, ranging from
face-sized masks dipped in red, orange, green, blue and black to unpainted figures standing several feet
tall.

James, 45, creates his carvings from centuries-old cedar trees and hand-made carbon steel tools.
When beginning a piece, James first scrapes the bark off the cedar log and cuts out the spongy, sap-
filled outer layer. He then uses power tools to remove large chunks of the wood and uses finer files
to create smaller cuts and chips. "It's like when you make an elephant, you cut out everything that's
not an elephant," James said.

When completing a piece, James often leans back in a chair to sand and oil his work. His
black hair is pulled back in a ponytail, his eyes glimmer like
round pieces of obsidian struck by light. His
mustache droops over his pursed
mouth as he rests a



carving against his paint-splattered red sweat pants, sanding it rhythmically. He works intently and with quiet confidence.

"When I carve, I concentrate on the idea that the elders held the world to be sacred and the brotherhood and sisterhood of all the creations on the earth," James said. "At one time we believed in balance in creation, like we do in families.

"Carving draws me into a world where I can be optimistic," he continued. "Sooner or later you become pessimistic, and you need something to draw you back."

James said he gains satisfaction from carving on political, religious and artistic levels.

"When I take and combine [my experience in politics and my knowledge of art] with the sacredness of the concept of creation and how the masks and the totems reflect the brotherhood and sisterhood of creation, then I appreciate it more," James said.

"It's a way of expressing the teachings and concepts of the ancestors."

Standing below the raven on the Maritime Heritage Park totem pole is Salmon Woman, who has the body of a Native American above the waist and a cascade of scales below. Salmon Woman tells the second part of the Lummi conservation story. While Raven was away, Bear, another Lummi man, entered the salmon spawning beds. The salmon children died when Bear touched them. Her round eyes of pearlescent, blue-green shell droop and tears dot her flat, broad cheeks, threatening to fall on her lips, which are frozen mid-sob. Salmon Woman cradles two baby salmon—dead and wilted—to her breast. She mourns the loss of her salmon children.

"[Native Americans] at one time, destroyed the salmon, and we learned," James said. "[Now] the population of salmon children is dying off rapidly, and everyone is faced with the decision as to whether or not we're going to hold our harvests to the point where the salmon are destroyed."

Before he depicted in his art situations like the depletion of salmon, James called attention to such issues in the political arena. He lobbied for 20 years on behalf of the Lummi and other Native American organizations on issues concerning the preservation of the environment, Native American religious and cultural traditions, and the improvement of the condition of indigenous people in the world. Politics—not art—was his passion.

"At first I didn't like the art," James said. "Twenty-five years ago I would have looked and said, 'That art is ugly,' but now I look at it and say, 'What is the artist trying to say; what part of the village life are they trying to depict?' and then I ... judge it based on that—not based on what I see."

It was James' younger brother Dale who sparked his interest in carving. Dale was recruited by master carver Morrie Alexander and was deeply engrossed in carving by the time James left for college. James said he thought Dale's artwork was ugly at first, but it made him want to learn about Lummi art. James produced his first carving in 1972, while a student at the University of Washington. It was a "speaker staff."

Throughout the '70s and '80s, James carved antlers and helped Dale with his wood carving from time to time.

"[Dale] is the one that was really living the art," James said. "My older brother Doug and I would always go in when he requested, and we were always really proud of his work and admired the progress he made and the style and techniques he used."

When Dale died in 1996, James took over as head carver of the House of Tears.

He said he felt comfortable taking over Dale's position.





"There was no question about myself, but I could have gone a long way with [Dale] if I had set my focus on retiring after 20 years," James said. "I can't replace my brother, but as carvers we forge a brotherhood. The spirit of sharing and cooperation is still there."

"Wolf Dancer" was the first piece James produced after dedicating himself to carving full-time. Eli Milton, who taught James carving and tool-making at the NWIC, praised James' tool-making and carving ability and called "Wolf Dancer" one of James' best carvings.

"It's good because [James] took the time to get it the way he wanted it," Milton said.

George Price, a carver from Seabird Island, British Columbia, with whom James now works, also had acclaim for "Wolf Dancer."

"[James] has a nice and unique style," Price said. "I could find his work anywhere in the world. If his eyes were anymore realistic, they would have to be human."

Just under six feet tall, the "Wolf Dancer" is a robust Native American male dancer positioned with his knees bent and his toes turned inward. He holds a mask in the shape of a wolf that has sharp, alert ears, a short and broad upturned nose and a long row of daggers for teeth. "Wolf Dancer" won James second place in "Non-monumental Carving" at the Northwest Indian Art Show in Portland in July.

Price said he was impressed by James' ability to jump into carving a large, three-dimensional figure on his first professional carving.

"There had to be fear to create something that large, but he broke through it," Price said. "[James'] character is excellent, his ability to learn is excellent, and his drive is amazing."

Currently, James and Price are working to secure a contract with the Tulalip Casino and to win a bid to create art for the new Seattle Safeco Stadium.

James is also working on two projects that support and promote interest in Native American art in Bellingham.

He is discussing with Dr. Bob Lawrence, president

of NWIC, the possibility of creating a Northwest Indian Art Institute that would bring Native American artists from all across the Pacific Northwest to NWIC.

James has a plan to revitalize downtown Bellingham by placing totem poles and benches in front of each shop.

"If we can get some bigger investors right away, we can kick it off," James said. "Bellingham needs something, with the dying timber and fishing industries, all they've got left is the mall."

For now, the only carving of James' that graces downtown is the Maritime Heritage Park conservation totem pole. Its final image is of a bear—with wide, wild eyes and a toothy, malicious grin—greedily holding onto a steelhead that dangles in front of its legs. When Raven discovered Bear in the spawning grounds, he turned him into a black bear on the spot and condemned him to remain there forever. Salmon Woman was so hurt by Bear's actions that she allowed only steelhead to return to the Lummi after spawning.

The Maritime Heritage Park totem pole is incorporated into the current fight to save the salmon. It was commissioned by the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, which is trying to put wild salmon back into Whatcom County streams.

"It's very fitting to what we're trying to express," said Michael McRory, NSEA boardmember. "It's one of the nicest poles I've seen. There are some that are bigger, but that one is beautifully executed."

"I struggle with limited talents and a quest to improve and comprehend what's in front of me," James said.

"We're so far out of balance that I feel overwhelmed. I try to express concepts of harmony."



story by Greg Tyson
photography by Barney Benedictson

REE o o r n

At 2 p.m., on the eve of Thanksgiving, 1971, a tall, slim, middle-aged man walked into the Portland International Airport. Outside a blizzard was raging. He was carrying an attache case and dressed in a light-brown trench coat, a dark business suit and a black tie. He identified himself as Dan Cooper. He paid \$20 for a one-way ticket to Seattle with a departure time at 2:50 p.m.

Onboard the Boeing 727, Cooper ordered a drink. As the stewardess handed him the beverage, he slipped her a note. He paused, opened his briefcase to expose a nest of wires and added, "I have a bomb."

Cooper demanded \$200,000 in unmarked bills, a money sack and four backpack parachutes. He stressed that if his demands were not met, he would destroy the plane. The FBI complied and acquired the items Cooper had requested. He then instructed the pilot to refuel the plane and fly toward Mexico.

At 8:11 p.m., 10,000 feet over a blizzard-stricken Cascade mountain range near Ariel, Washington, the red light on the pilot's console indicating a dramatic change in cabin pressure went off. Cooper had jumped!

A search was assembled. A reporter covering the crime incorrectly referred to Cooper as D.B. Cooper. The name stuck.

Subsequently, no trace of Cooper was ever recovered—no parachute, no body, nothing. In 1980, a boy found \$5,800 washed up on a sandbar of the Columbia River. Ralph Hammelsbach, the former head of the FBI's search for Cooper until Hammelsbach's retirement in 1983, concluded Cooper had probably died in the mountains and then been swept up by a mountain stream.

Many people disagreed with Hammelsbach's assessment of the case.

For Dona Elliott, owner of Ariel Store and Tavern, the answer is

End

obvious.

"I bet he's still alive," Elliott said.

Elliott, 61, is one of Ariel's many staunch Cooper supporters. She also oversees "D.B. Cooper Days," the annual festivities that pay homage to Cooper.

"We've had between 300 to 500 people here," Elliott said.

For Elliott, Cooper's appeal stems from the mystery of his motives.

"He had a reason only he knows," Elliott said.

Despite all the ballyhoo surrounding D.B. Cooper, Ariel hardly looks like a place where you would find a major festival.

Ariel is a tiny logging town 10 miles east of Woodland and roughly seven miles west of Mount St. Helens. It is home to about 200 people—mostly loggers. Many of the homes are concealed by towering Douglas firs. Ariel Store, the hub of the Ariel community, is located on an embankment near the Lewis

"Listen to the people talk. The FBI is stumped. Some people say he didn't jump. But of all the possibilities that are tattered and worn. No matter what you say my friend. A legend has been born."

To some, the poem is an effective summation of the Cooper legend.

"It's part of history," said Gabriele Kloppe, a resident of Ariel and frequent customer of Ariel Store.

Eyeing an old FBI sketch of Cooper, Kloppe seemed genuinely smitten by the dark, opaque figure.

"He's a player," Kloppe said as her eyes grew narrower. "Come play with me."

"Maybe he was on a dare. He wanted to do this. If I would have been there, I would



River. It's one of the few places in Ariel not hidden by trees.

Ariel Store looks like a piece from a Knots Berry Farm exhibit. Built in 1929, the store is comprised of wood and shingles. Resting on the front porch is a large, white sofa and a freezer. The weather-beaten sign just above the door reads, "Ariel Store: Home of D.B. Cooper Days."

Once inside, customers get a real sense of its history. Above the oak-finished bar hangs an old, gargantuan chainsaw. Pictures of Ariel's illustrious logging past hang on the walls. In the back of the bar rests a television and two easy chairs. Cooper's parachute, replete with signatures of the various people who have attended the Cooper festivities, is stretched across the ceiling. On the far back wall is the D.B. Cooper display.

The display is to D.B. Cooper what the Academy Awards are to the movie industry. Nearly every article, sketch and tidbit about Cooper is found on this wall. One of the more memorable additions to the display is a poem by former Ariel Store owner Richard Purdy.

The poem "The Ballad of D.B. Cooper" is a simple, yet intriguing, encapsulation of the Cooper legend. It reads:

have said, 'Count me in! I'm right there with you!'"

Kloppe's ringing endorsement may seem a bit precarious, but it's a sentiment shared by many.

"He got something away on the government," Elliott said. "They screw us over all the time."

"Whatever happened, he got it done, and he got it done right," said Charlie Mowri, a logger and resident of Ariel.

With his sharp, charcoal eyes and edgy, staccato voice, Mowri admits his frequent visits to Ariel Store are not always social.

"I usually come here looking for a fight or trying to start one," Mowri said, tossing back a shot of whiskey.

Talking to Mowri is akin to walking across a minefield—one wrong step and you're a goner. The only difference with Mowri is that you're never quite sure what will set him off. One minute he might shrug off Cooper as just another two-bit hoodlum; the next minute, he might be in your face like an overprotective guard dog, fuming over your failure to give Cooper his

due for his role in putting a dent in the government's steely facade.

"That's the only thing that matters," Mowri said.

Mowri was in high school when the incident occurred. He remembers police and FBI searching Ariel for clues to Cooper's whereabouts.

"All these guys came jumping in and going through our property," Mowri said. "They came in and ripped it up."

Elliott was also in Ariel during the time of the incident. She recalls hearing the deafening roar of the plane's engines as it flew over.

in the cold, dark sky. Indeed, many people find it difficult to celebrate the exploits of a known felon.

"I have no admiration for him at all," said Hammelsbach in a Dec. 6, 1996 article in the LA Times. "He's not at all admirable; he's just stupid and greedy."

Germaine Tricola, 74, who owned Ariel Store in 1971, didn't take Cooper quite as seriously.

"We needed an excuse to party," she said. Tricola was the first person to propose the celebration. She and her friend Dave Butterfield coordinated the event. The first party was in 1972.

"We never condoned what he did," Tricola stressed.

D.B. Cooper Days has garnered quite a following. In fact, Tricola points out Jimmy Carter actually called one year wanting to know how the party was going.

"Everybody has a great time," Mowri said.

The festivities consist of beer, stew, jelly sandwiches, drawings, and a look-alike contest. One year a basset hound dressed in Cooper's trademark sunglasses won first prize.

In addition to man's best friend, the look-alike contest also attracted a Cooper fan from Maui.

Dressed in a dark business suit, dark sunglasses and limping on a cane, the man stopped by the festivities in 1997.

"He said to me, 'See, I did hurt myself when I jumped,'" Elliott said. "He could have been him. He was an ex-jumper! He could have pulled the heist off easily."

Amazingly enough, the man's name was Dan R. Cooper!

In addition to D.B. Cooper wannabes, quite a few foreign students have also dropped by. Elliott was particularly amused by a group of over-eager Japanese students.

"They came swarming in here," Elliott said. "And all I could understand was 'D.B. Cooper.'"

For the stout-hearted, there's also parachuting over Lake Merwin near Ariel—the spot over which Cooper jumped.

Although Cooper will probably never be found, most fans don't mind. Many are just content to dance and pay their respects to their parachuting folk hero.

"If people are interested, that's okay," Elliott said.

She points out that Ariel has changed since the inception of all the Cooper ballyhoo.

"People celebrating Cooper still celebrate him," Elliott said. "People who think it's bullshit still think it's bullshit."

Elliott picks up a shot glass. As she cleans it out, she walks over to the Cooper display, stares at the myriad of Cooper memorabilia, and her eyes beam with amazement.

"He got away," Elliott said. "That's all that matters."



"It was so low," Elliott said. "I thought it was going to crash."

Elliott revels in all the publicity Cooper attracted to Ariel. She feels Cooper is entirely worthy of all the attention.

"At least he didn't hurt anybody," Elliott said. "And I'm sure he didn't have any intention of hurting anybody."

And if Cooper would have hurt somebody?

"We wouldn't have celebrated him," Elliott said. "[The hijacking] went off far too smoothly for him to kill somebody."

Many point out that if stripped of all its hype and mystery, the incident would not have seemed quite as glamorous.

"He's a chicken-shit," an anonymous Ariel customer said. "He put all those people in god-damned jeopardy."

"It could happen again," Mowri said, looking out the window as if expecting a clue to materialize

S ullivan's



web

story by Anna Shaffer
photography by Barney Benedictson

She briskly wheels the small, gray cart down the narrow hallway. The

wisps of long black hair straying from the loose bun at the nape of her

neck, her wrinkled navy blue polo shirt and her dirt-streaked khaki pants indicate a busy work day. Almost time to go home, but first things first.

It's dinner time, and her residents are no doubt anticipating the ripe fruits and vegetables resting on her cart. She stops, unlocks a panel door,

climbs up a three-step ladder and gingerly drops chunks of apples,

romaine lettuce and fish flakes to the scavengers waiting below. Room service! The black, almond-sized Darkling Beetles immediately scurry over logs and through sand to eat their dinner, their antennae quivering like newly busted guitar strings, their six legs moving as fast as they can.

She pushes the cart toward the next destination and after unlocking another panel door and grabbing some scissors, she diligently cuts up the contents of a white plastic cup and dumps them onto the surface of the water. The chopped-up meal worms and frozen crickets are a delicacy for the Sunburst Diving Beetles, native of Arizona, resident of "a desert wetland," who like to munch on the squishy insides. Their two red, feather-like flippers move back and forth like oars, propelling them through the water toward the tasty treat.

The smell of earth and moisture permeates the air, and the chirping of crickets blends with a sound like a metal zipper running its course. She moves onto some of her other dependents: Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches the size of large potato chips. A sign near the bottom of their tank reads "Please don't tap on the glass—it bugs us," reminding visitors of all ages that the tenants like their peace and quiet. She grabs a plastic bottle from the cart and squirts them with a fine mist of water.

She is 26-year-old entomologist Erin Sullivan, these critters are her babies, and Woodland Park Zoo's "Bug" World is her home away from home.

Behind the scenes in the prep room, rows of tanks filled with every creepy crawly imaginable line the walls. One tank, labeled "Horse Lubbers," will be one of the newest additions to "Bug" World. The creatures inside

look like overgrown black grasshoppers with bright orange and yellow freckles.

Aerators hum in harmony with the gurgle of water. A bug zapper

rests in the corner by the door, casting its neon purple glow on its surroundings, ready to electrocute any foreign arthropod who dares to attempt an escape from the confines of "Bug" World and contaminate the Northwest ecosystem. A clock with

a red-winged insect in the place of each number ticks away meticulously in one corner. Time flies. The large, white refrigerator, covered with bug magnets and bug comic clippings ranging from "Far Side" to "Garfield," serves as both food storage and a bug graveyard, storing deceased bugs for future use in education programs.

Among the bug posters, feeding schedules and other bug paraphernalia

hangs a yellow card with a green crayon drawing of a praying mantis and

the words "To: Erin Sullivan, insect keeper" scrawled on the front. "A child gave me that," Sullivan said, gleaming with pride, "after a demonstration of how praying mantises eat—they grab their victims and start munching."

Next to the card hangs a certificate of achievement from Sullivan's former co-workers at the San Francisco Insect Zoo, a program from

"Mothra," a rock musical which Sullivan insists was "brilliance," as well as a Saint Bushmill's Choir sticker, Sullivan's favorite Irish punk-band. Nestled comfortably on a bar stool next to a cluttered work table, Sullivan recalls how her interest in bugs reaches back into her childhood.

"When I was little, I had a lot of spiders in jars," she says. "I was told, because of 'Charlotte's Web,' that a spider would only lay one egg case and then she would die. But I had a spider in a jar, and she laid five egg cases, and I thought she was the most miraculous spider ever!" Sullivan throws up her hands and points her round, lightly freckled face to the heavens, laughing with obvious delight at her childish naiveté. "The more that I kept spiders in jars, the more I found out that 'Charlotte's Web' wasn't true."

Suddenly, Sullivan's dark brown eyes dart excitedly toward the Horse Lubber tank. "Hey, look! They're mating!" she cries, then looks away apologetically. "I caught that out of the corner of my eye." She looks again at the copulating bugs and giggles. They lost their struggle to stay on their chosen "branch of love" and fell to the bottom of the tank. "They're rompin' ... They're rollin'," she says, smiling again. "I get easily distracted in here."

"Somebody once said to me that bugs were 'little packets o' science,' which is true. They are. We use them a lot for our education programs, but we can use them as foundation for any topic we want to talk about, such as conservation, physiology, morphology, population biology, statistics, ecology, evolution, conservation ... everything and anything." Sullivan talks faster and faster, her face becoming animated to reveal her excitement.

"With a lot of zookeeping jobs, there is some variation in the routine, but it is pretty much the same," she explains. "You come in and take care of the animals ... da, da, da. With elephants, for example, their life span is around 50 years, a really long time. But bugs have a very short life span. Every single day is different in the bug house."

"Like these guys," she says, gesturing toward the Lubbers. "They just started mating. They were babies three months ago. So you never know what is going to be hatching, dying, laying eggs and mating ... Instead of having one animal, we have up to 30 species. Each one requires a different environment and different food, so you have to be able to tweak all these different things, so it's really stimulating as well."

As a general biology major at UC Davis, Sullivan tried coupling her academic studies with volunteering to gain some hands-on experience working in the real world and choosing a field of biology. While taking an entomology class for her major, she landed a volunteer position at the

San Francisco Insect Zoo, where she found her calling.

Sullivan asserts that when she was looking for a career, finding people she enjoyed working with was as important as finding a job that interested her.

"It's no good to be doing a job where you like the job but you hate the people. When I got to the Insect Zoo, I really liked all the people, there and they ended up becoming my best friends. They were a bunch of like-minded people who were just as nutty and wacky as me, and who all looked at the world the same way, which was a little bit off-center," she says, laughing sheepishly. "How many people willingly stick their hand in a pile of dung to feed Dung Beetles? That's not normal!"

Sullivan volunteered at the Insect Zoo during college. By the time she graduated from UC Davis with a degree in

biology and a minor in entomology, she had also acquired experience working in butterfly houses, working with bees, conducting research and doing other zookeeping work. After traveling through Europe for a few weeks, she began working full-time as a keeper at the San Francisco Insect Zoo.

"When I walked into the Insect Zoo for my first day as a zookeeper, the job posting for Woodland Park Zoo's 'Bug' World was there. Just to see where my resume was as far as competition for other insect-keeping jobs, I applied, and eight months later I ended up getting the job," she says, matter-of-factly.

In February of 1996, Sullivan found herself moving to Seattle to become the zoo's first bug keeper.

"When they brought me to the exhibit, it was an empty building," She says, her eyes widening. She pauses for a moment and laughs nervously, recalling her shock and excitement. "That was a pretty intense moment ... I thought I was just going to be taking care of an exhibit, and this was designing an entire exhibit ... something I've always wanted to do but didn't think I'd get the chance to do for a long time."

Along with Lynn Giuler, the zoo's project manager, Sullivan began work on the conceptual planning of the future "Bug" World, an exhibit devoted entirely to arthropods and their role in the ecosystem. They put together the species list of insects to be on exhibit, designed the graphics and wrote all the titles.

"She was enthusiastic, dedicated to education, and fun. Because of her dedication and passion for insects, she wanted to share this information with the public," Giuler says.

On Halloween of 1997, almost a year later, the exhibit opened after one minor mishap—the hunt for a missing scorpion.

"It was opening day, and we had thousands of people waiting to come into 'Bug' World. But when we counted the scorpions, we came up short. They were all living together, so they could have eaten each other, but we opened up the building late because we literally had to tear the place apart. We never found it.

"It was on the local TV news and went national. Friends of mine from Texas were calling up and telling me, 'We heard about your opening day!'" Sullivan says, sighing in exasperation.

Since then, Sullivan's work day has begun at 8:30 a.m. Although she asserts that there is no such thing as a "typical" work day for her, she does admit there are always daily tasks that need to be done.

"All the bugs [on exhibit] need to be fed by 9:30 a.m.," she says. "I have to change out the brambles for the Walking Sticks, make scavenger

fruit dishes, feed the predators, mist the bugs that require extra humidity, clean the glass, sweep, make sure everything in the exhibit is fine before the public comes in. Then I come back here and do the same thing, but

more at a leisurely pace." She indicates the prep room around her. "Back here is where we raise all the babies and teen-agers."

She pauses and looks in the far corner of the prep room. "Over there, we also have some mystery spiders and a mystery scorpion. This one,"

she says, pointing to a spider egg case in a small plastic container, "came

in on a New Zealand shipment of kiwis from QFC."

Sullivan explains that when an unidentified insect species comes in from QFC or Safeway or an import-export company, she treats it as if it is poisonous until the species molts, or sheds its skin. The molt is then mailed to a lab for identification.

Her attention then turns to a sign on a dusty-looking tank resting near the floor. "RIP: Do not disturb tank 'till end of official mourning period," it warns. Sullivan crouches down and eyes the tank with obvious affection. This tank was the home of a Hobo Spider who built a beautiful multi-layered web, which Sullivan cannot yet bring herself to destroy. The

dead spider, eight legs stiff and crumpled, still occupies one corner of the tank.

Sullivan says that her work doesn't give her much time to relax. "Free time? What's that?" she laughs jokingly.

Some of Sullivan's leisure time is spent practicing and performing with Cunla, her traditional Irish band. But she doesn't play an instrument.

"Do I sing? No. Well, I sing with my feet," she explains, stating that she is a traditional Irish dancer in the group. Although the band has just cut a CD of traditional Irish music and will be releasing it soon, they recently decided to break up because, according to Sullivan, "We're all very busy."

As if to illustrate her point, Sullivan dashes around, feeding, spraying, and cleaning, continuing with her evening chores. Thinking about the importance of the creatures she works with every day, Sullivan points out that bugs are an indicator species, meaning that if bugs have disappeared

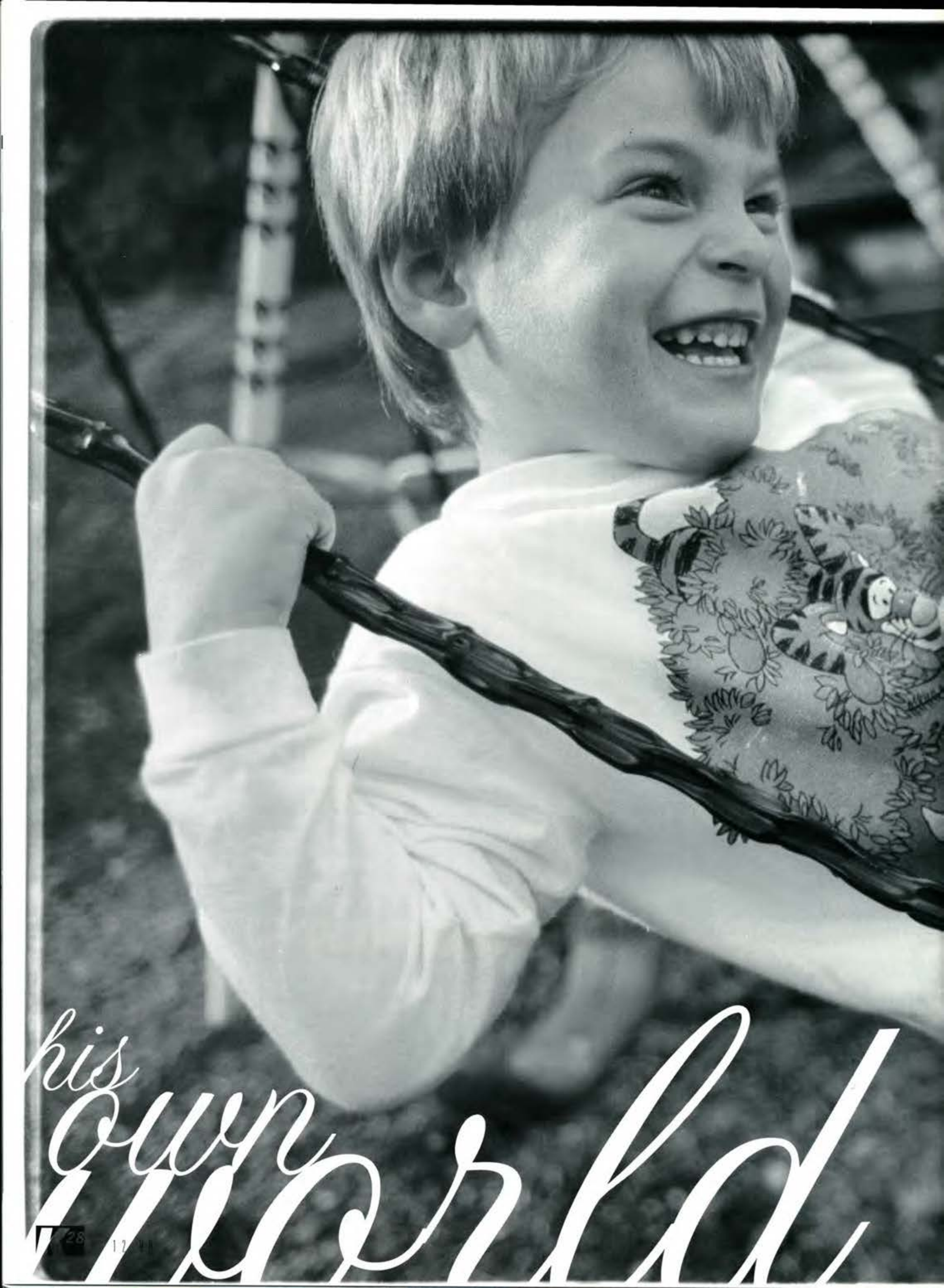
from a particular habitat, or if the bug population is declining, it indicates that the habitat isn't stable and something needs to be done to remedy it.

"The amount of stuff bugs do to make sure that everyday life and habitats go well is really phenomenal. They help decompose things; they help pollinate; they eat other bugs so we aren't over-run by bugs, and they are a major part of the food web. If people have more of an appreciation for

bugs and where they fit in, they'll have more of an appreciation for habitat and habitat conservation, even on a small level.

"There's also the 'ugh' factor," Sullivan explains. "People don't understand bugs and everything they do, so they're just misunderstood. We need somebody to show the diversity and show the wonder and that they really are animals, and that they do amazing things for the environment."





his
own
world



Off to the left, in a playroom stuffed with puzzles, toy drums—all the typical toys of a toddler—a brightly colored, child-sized desk stood alone. Bare of crayons and coloring books, only Gregg-Anthony Moon's yellow nametag marred the desk's plastic surface.

Poised for action in his Winnie the Pooh T-shirt and new tennis shoes, his bright eyes peered from under fine blond hair, Gregg-Anthony appears to be an ordinary 4-year-old kid. Then he began to rock, back and forth, back and forth. His bright blue eyes fixed on a far distant point, while a thin, keening sound, "EEEEEEE," howled from between his lips.

Suddenly, a dramatic change came over him. Gregg-Anthony spied Bryce Aktepy, his therapist, aide and companion. Leaping up and down in excitement, Gregg-Anthony clapped, his hands flailed wildly through the air and contacted finally with a loud "Smack!" His frantic attempts to communicate verbally result only in more "EEEEEEE's".

Together, they began Gregg-Anthony's daily exercises.

"Look at me," Aktepy said, pointing directly at his own eyes. He struggled to get his pupil's attention while Gregg-Anthony tried to slip a number six-shaped puzzle piece into number nine's spot. The frustration building in the child's eyes peaked, then released; he reached back his arm, grunted and

threw the puzzle piece across the floor.

"I know, those six's and nine's can get pretty confusing," Aktepy said, in a calming voice. "Go pick it up, please."

Gregg-Anthony slowly, grudgingly walked over to pick up the puzzle piece, stopping to paw a bat-shaped balloon on the way.

"Good job," Aktepy exclaimed, upon Gregg-Anthony's return. "Do you want a cookie?"

Gregg-Anthony, 4, suffers from a form of autism.

According to the Autism Research Institute, autism is a biological brain disorder that begins during the first two-and-a-half years of life. While every case presents different symptoms, some autistic traits include staring into space,



throwing tantrums and doing repetitive activities for no apparent reason. Despite these behavioral differences, most autistic children are normal in appearance.

"(Autism) is a social disorder; (autistics) can't read other people," said Debbie Moon, Gregg-Anthony's mother, hands tightly folded atop jean-clad legs. "When I'm angry he doesn't realize that I'm angry."

"They are really into themselves. All they know is what is going on with them; they don't see the outside world like a typical person would," Debbie added, resignedly.

Gregg-Anthony's family discovered he was autistic when he was about 18 months old.

"At first we thought he had a hearing problem because he wasn't acknowledging us at all," Debbie said. "He was just in his own little world," she concluded.

Gregg-Anthony's daily routine does not resemble a typical toddler's. His sleeping patterns vary greatly from day to day—he might awaken before dawn after running around until the wee hours, his mother said.

He's up and on the school bus by 12:45 p.m., though. Gregg-Anthony attends pre-school at Geneva Elementary, Tuesday through Thursday. At Geneva, he has a personal aide to work with him.

Gregg-Anthony lacks a number of necessary, basic skills. It is hard for him to communicate verbally; he barely speaks at all. His fine-motor skills, such as the hand-eye coordination essential to writing, coloring or playing catch,

are below average.

Gregg-Anthony attends weekly speech and occupational therapy sessions to help build these skills; he also receives weekly help from Aktepy.

Aktepy met the Moon family through a class at Western, entitled Introduction to Exceptional Children. Four other Western students come to the Moon's home and perform different exercises each week, helping Gregg-Anthony combat autism.

In one such activity, Gregg-Anthony must pick up colorful beads of assorted shapes and sizes, then string them on a piece of rope.

"Beading works his fine-motor skills," Aktepy said, while Gregg-Anthony snatched up a green, oval-shaped bead and easily slipped it on the rope. "When we first started this he had a real hard time with it."

Through a number of different exercises, his fine-motor skills are beginning to improve, Aktepy said.

After every exercise Gregg-Anthony completes he is rewarded with some kind of treat, usually food, encouraging him to persevere. To receive a reward he must point at a picture of the food he desires. This is known as Picture Exchange Communication System [PECS].

Velcroed to the PECS board are laminated pictures of activities, food, places and toys. If Gregg-Anthony wants something, this is his means of communication.

"PECS is used for autistic children who don't have speech, so he can tear off a picture of a banana and give it to me, and I know he wants a banana," Debbie said. "It's his way of communicating to me—to show me a picture of what he wants."

"Bugles are his favorite reward," Aktepy added.

One of Gregg-Anthony's strong points is his gross-motor skills.

"He has great gross-motor skills, like balance and strength and jumping," Aktepy said, while holding onto only Gregg-Anthony's hands and allowing him to lean back, his feet balanced upon Aktepy's thighs.

Gregg-Anthony is also very good at matching. He can group dogs, cats, sheep and other animals with a corresponding picture.

"He can match anything," Debbie said, laughing. "He can now distinguish pictures one from another, which was a big step for him."

"Time to do another exercise," Aktepy called out.

Gregg-Anthony plucked the reading activity off his Velcro PECS board, so Aktepy grabbed a sing-along book.

"Old McDonald had a farm," Aktepy crooned, while Gregg-Anthony paid close attention to the music, tapping his hand on the carpeted floor. "What's the pig say? What's the pig say? Snort, Snort," Aktepy squealed.

Gregg-Anthony looked at him, wide eyed, and snorted.

"Great job," Aktepy affirmed.

As a reward for completing the book activity, Gregg-Anthony chose to do one of his favorite outdoor games—jumping on the trampoline. He darted toward the door and Aktepy quickly followed.

"EEEEEEEEEEEE," Gregg-Anthony screamed, as he and

they can't read other



people

Aktepy disappeared up the stairs.

Once in a while, Gregg-Anthony gets frustrated and agitated with what is going on around him. He becomes aggressive or enters a state called "stemming," that is common to autism sufferers.

"Stemming is where they just totally go into themselves, and they shut-off everything else," Debbie said. "They focus in on something like ... Gregg likes to spin lids or plates or something, and when he's spinning he is so focused in on the movement of the spinning that nothing around him exists."

Before anyone can get through to him, they must make him stop, she said.

"He gets so frustrated because he doesn't speak, so he can't tell you when he's upset," Debbie continued, sipping her coffee. "Biting is an issue, and he will hit once in awhile, but he's not a big hitter. I don't think it's out of anger; sometimes he will grab your hair to show you that he wants you to get closer to him."

Gregg-Anthony's frustration reveals itself sometimes when he is trying to interact with other children. "He scares them ... he will run up to them and get right in their face, and it scares them," Debbie said. "He doesn't really know how to sit and play with another child."

"Sometimes he will copy another child ... he has a little friend he's grown up with, and when (his friend) goes up and down the slide, Gregg will follow him up and down the slide. When (his friend) is jumping, Gregg will look at him and start jumping, which is really a good sign."

This is Gregg-Anthony's way of communicating with other children, she said.

Gregg-Anthony quickly became restive, so Aktepy directed his attention to a battery-operated toy train, immediately intriguing him. He ran right over and hopped down next to Aktepy.

For the parents, Debbie said, an autistic child is even more draining than a typical child.

"You have to watch him constantly. He's very unpredictable," Debbie said, eyes on Gregg-Anthony while he and Aktepy play with the train. "He can figure out how to unlock doors, but he doesn't have a fear of the street or anything."

"All the neighbors we have met, we've told them that if they see him out to please bring him home, which has happened already."

Clapping echoed across the room as the toy train chugged along the track. Gregg-Anthony's smile unfolded from ear to ear as he observed the train cart. His mother sighed and then, finally, grinned.

"He is very happy; not all autistic kids are happy, but I was fortunate enough to have Gregg," Debbie said. "He's in his own little world, and as far as he's concerned, his world's happy."

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